TYTHES

No Property to, nor lawful maintenance for a

Powerful Gospel-preaching Ministry.

OR

A Compulsory Maintenance for Christs Ministers is contrary to Christs Doctrine and example of his Apostles, and the example of the faithful Ministers of Christ, and famous Reformers in all ages, as *VVickliffe*, *Hus*, and divers others, with an old Prophecy written by *Iohn Hus*, as it is recorded by *Fox* in his Acts and Monuments, commonly called the Book of *Martyrs*.

With a

DISCOVERY

Of the marks of the

False Prophets and Ministers

In all Ages (as they are found recorded in the Ecclesiastical History) since the Apostles days to this very time agreeing with the Scriptures of truth both of the Old and New Testament.

Written by a lover of the souls of all men, *John Crook*.

ἄνευ ἀρετῆς θεὸς ονομα μονον.
Qui non habet vitam Christi, Christum non habet.

They are the children of Abraham *that does the works of* Abraham.
So they are the children of the Martyrs that follow their steps, and not they who are crying them up with their tongues, and maintaining and taking of Tythes and other abominations with their practices, which the Martyres and holy men witnessed against, and some have lost their lives for.

London Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the Bull and Mouth near *Aldersgate*, 1659.

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THE PREFACE.

BUY the truth and ſell it not, was the ſaying of the wiſeſt of men, and is the voice and endeavour of all the children of Wiſdom, who know the price thereof to be beyond Rubies, and the enjoyment thereof to be more precious then fine gold, and the purchaſing thereof to be worth the ſelling of all, that it may be poſſeſſed, for in it is riches and honour, and by it comes the pearl of great price to be known; And who makes all truly rich, truly wiſe and truly free, that comes to the knowledge of it, but this is the Myſtery of it: It is not purchaſed without the ſelling of all, nor cannot be enjoyed but by thoſe who are poor in Spirit, and yet nothing more free gift then that, nor nothing more truly bought without money and without price then it, and the knowledge of this Myſtery is as free in its revealing as this truth is in its appearing in and to the ſons and daughters of men, many have taken pains to find it, but it hath been hid from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the wiſe and prudent, who have talked of the fame thereof, but becauſe of the dearneſs of the rate, have been offended at it, & ſo have never come to the enjoyment of the thing it ſelf, but have ſatisfied themſelves with dead Pictures, and likeneſſes framed in the Chambers of their Imagery, which Idolatry is more dangerous then theirs who fall down to an Image made of wood and ſtone; and when the beauty of truth it ſelf ſo appears, that it out-ſhines their Image, then they either oppoſe it with open oppoſition, or elſe will not receive it, becauſe it appears with its viſage marred more then any of the likeneſſes that hath yet ſhewed themſelves; and exp ſeth the livers of it to the worlds ſcornes, to profeſſors rage, and to great mens and Rulers diſdain and hatred, and becauſe it appears to the ſtaining of their glory and pride: they do now not much un-like the Senate of Rome *of old, when* Tyberius *made Relation to them of Chriſt and his Miracles, who are ſaid to reject them,* for no other cauſe, but becauſe they did not firſt approve the ſame; *And further,* Tertullian *a man well experienced in the Roman Laws, in his Apologie for the Chriſtians, in his 5. Chapt. ſaith (by interpretation) thus,* That it was an antient decree, that no god ſhould be conſecrated by the Emperour, unleſs it were

firſt agreed unto by the Senate; *who ſaith (on the behalf of the Chriſtians)* That the Deity is weighed amongſt you after mans will and judgement, unleſs that God pleaſe man, he is not made God, ſo that by this decree man muſt be gracious and favourable to God; *Not much unlike to this conſtitution of mind have many grave Senators appeared in theſe dayes, who could willingly have contributed to the putting down Tithes, if the great men could bear it & the Prieſts be pleaſed to have it ſo, and the Parliament account it no diſgrace to move againſt them, nor the Lawyers be angry for impairing their trade; but ſuch (it is to be feared) loves the praiſe of men more then the praiſe of God, and while they pleaſe men, are not the ſervants of Chriſt; but where is theſe mens faith? and what is become of their experiences? cannot he that hath delivered from the oppreſſive Court of Wards, and from the arbitrary Star-Chamber Court, from the hands of the late King, from the power of the Biſhops, and from others alſo (who have ſaid as* Abſalom *once did, to palliate his deſign, Oh that all men would come to me, and I will do them Juſtice, and take away oppreſſions) deliver out of the hands of this Philiſtine (the Tithes) alſo? yea verily, the Lord will deliver his people from this intolerable yoke of bondage, and if thoſe in preſent power do not do it, deliverance ſhall come another way, for the Lord God is appearing in power and great glory, to deliver his oppreſſed ſeed, and to take away the abominations from the midſt of the Nations: & the longer any have continued, the more need there is to haſten the removing of them; and whereas there is a cry among people, that to take away Tithes, is to deſtroy property, &c. Therefore have I written this following diſcourſe, that all ſober-minded people may underſtand, how that both by the Law of God, the Common, and Statute Law of this Nation alſo, together with ſeveral Preſidents of the Martyrs and others, who in the darkeſt times of Popery Witneſſed againſt Tithes, and all kind of compulſory maintenance (whatſoever) for preaching, always eſteeming Tithes to be but a meer Almes, as by their own words at large may appear; which I have ſet down (as I find them recorded in the Book of Martyrs) for the ſatisfaction of thoſe who deſire to know the truth, and to be made free by it.*

Tythes no property to nor lawful maintenance for a Gospel, powerful, preaching Ministry, &c.

PRoperty is that which a man hath a just right to and interest in, without injury to another, and is derived to him, either by descent, purchase, or gift, and not by custom onely, for that gives no man a title or property that had it not rightly confirmed upon him, as aforesaid; for although custome to places, and some things are accounted as law, yet always with this limitation, such customes as are good and reasonable; for saith *Cook*, *Custome ought to be reasonable, & excerta causa rationabili usitata*, &c. neither doth the law of *England* create or make any man a title or property, that had none before, but only conserves and maintains every mans just property and equal right; for the just laws of a Nation are their walls to their Cities, and bars to their gates; and by them the land of every man is inclosed from other, though it lie in open field; and if a man do trespass therein, the Writ shall be *quare clausum fregit*, as saith the law, and every law of the Nation must be consonant to the law of God; and therefore (saith the law book) *The laws of Princes, the commandements of Prelates, the Statutes of Commonalties, ne yet the Ordinance of the Church, is not righteous nor obligatory, except it be consonant to the law of God, and by such a law of man as is consonant to the law of God, it appeareth who hath right to lands and goods, and who not, for whatsoever a man hath by such laws of the Nation, he hath righteously, and whatsoever a man hath against such laws, is unrighteously had*; these be the very words of the law; and also by the Statute law of this Nation it appears, *That no man of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be, hath power to dispence with Gods laws, as all the Clergy of this Realm and most part of all the Universities of Christendom, and we also do affirm and think*; these be the very words of the Statute of 28. *Hen.* 8. & 7. *ch.*

Cook. 6. book of Reports.

Dr. & Stud. cap. 4. p. 7. 8.

Stat. made by King, Lords, and Commons.

Therefore seeing that every law of man must be consonant to the law of God, or else it is no law; and that every custome that is accounted as a law must be reasonable, and every law of man must be equal and just according to the law of God (as the law it self saith) as before is mentioned, and no man can have a property but by descent, purchase, or gift, the law it self, not creating a property, but onely conserving to every man his just right and interest, as above said; and those laws for Tything made in the time both of *Hen.* 8. & *Edw.* the 6. (there being no law before made by Parliaments, onely the Statute of *Ric.* 2. 15. & 6. confirmed by *Hen.* the 4. by which it appears that Tythes were but a free gift or alms, and therefore special care is taken that a convenient portion of the Tythes be set out for a maintenance for the poor of the Parish, (as by that Statute appears, though made in the midnight of Popery,) not wholly forgetting the end for which they were given under the law, that there might be no begger in Israel.

And

And were it not righteous and just, that those who have robbed the poor of that which was their due by law, should themselves be made poor, and have that taken from them, which they have so long robbed others of, contrary to Law? I say the Statute made in *Hen.* 8. and *Edw.* the 6. time, did not create aright, but onely confirm what was then in that night of Popery, presumed and supposed to be aright (upon grounds which now appears to be false) *viz.* as belonging to God and holy Church, and were then called in the Stat. of *Hen.* 8. spiritual gifts, and Impropriate Tythes that were sold after the dissolution, are said now to be made temporal, and not before; and neither these nor any other laws, ever gave any man a right or property in or to Tythes, but onely through the blindness and superstition of those Popish times, supposed a right upon a spiritual ground, as aforesaid, and so gave power to Ecclesiastical Courts to sue for them, which before they could not do, but onely excommunicate for non payment, but by those Statutes they might sue in Ecclesiastical Courts but not else where, as the Statute of *Edw.* the 6. saith, upon which Statute they bring their Action for treble damages, which Statute it self restrains the trial of Tythes to Ecclesiastical Courts, and not elsewhere; and for Judges to make laws, or to interpret the laws contrary to the words of the law, is a presumption, not much unlike that which Israel of old in difficult cases was to beware of, and not to be hasty in; but to do according to the sentence of the law, from which they were not to decline either to the right hand or the left (upon pain of death) for if the law that is just be declined and left to mans will; is not the maxim of the law made good, *Misera servitus est, ubi jus est vagum, aut incognitum*; that is a miserable bondage, where the law is left to the will of the Judge, and in this case where the Statute restrains it, what Judge may go further? and to say where a penalty is appointed, and no way mentioned for the recovering of it, that then it shall be taken for granted, that the Courts at *Westminster* are intended; is (in this case) to make the law intend against it self (for the law is called *approved reason*) and to suppose that the treble damages are recoverable at common law, when the principle it self (for the non payment of which the treble damages are due) is not yet proved a debt, nor is not recoverable but in the spiritual Courts, is as much as if a man should say, that I promised to pay him ten pounds upon the first of *May* last, and if it were not paid I would give him thirty pounds, and he should be admitted to sue for the thirty pounds (penalty for the non payment of the ten pounds) and yet may not sue for the said ten pounds to prove that promised, and not paid accordingly, or to try the accessary before the principal; when as if no fact was committed, no man for being accessary could be punished; and therefore before Tythes be proved in the *Ecclesiastical Courts, to be substracted, or withheld*, or not set out, no damages (for not setting out) *can justly and legally* be recovered; and for any man to take away my corn and hay, *&c.* without my consent, or recovered in manner aforesaid, differs nothing from him that pretends a debt, and without any further proceedings, comes and takes away my goods by force and against my will; but some do say Justices of Peace have power to make a judgement in the case; many doth that by power which they cannot do by law, but Justices are onely authorized by an Ordinance of Parliament; and if the preamble of

Deut. 17. 12.

this

this Ordinance may be called (*clavis legis*) as preambles to laws are called, then their power is at an end, because they were but intrusted by reason of the exegencies of war; Courts of justice being obstructed, and if the Justices of Peace, or their Clerks, or kindred were not some way gainers by it, they need not now act upon that Ordinance, the reason of that temporary law being taken away, *viz.* obstructions of Courts of Justice, the law it self ceaseth, if this maxim in the law be true, *viz.* That *the reason of the law is the law it self*, and especially if *Cook* say true, *viz.* *That an Ordinance bindeth not in succession*; besides, that matters of Title should be determined in an Alehouse or private chamber, is a shame to a free State, and no honor to Justices of Peace to intermeddle with that (which indeed) they have not legally to do withal, they acting onely by an Ordinance, and that Ordinance never yet confirmed by Act. What, are not all the Courts at *Westminster* sufficient? Take heed, for *To over do is to undo*; but however the Justices Ordinance hath no better bottom then a supposed right, as aforesaid, which is no right, but a common wrong, and they that act upon that Ordinance now, are no friends to true freedom, to say no more.

And that Tythes are an oppression and unrighteous thing, many have born their testimony, both Martyrs and others, as may appear more at large hereafter; and for any to say that another hath as good a property in, and right to the tenth of my increase, as I have to nine parts, or as I have to the coat of my back, or to the nine parts of my land, is ignorance to be pitied, rather then to be disputed against; but as custome in sinning begets hardness, so doth superstition and ignorance, by tradition begat faith in a lye, which makes truth so hard to be received, by aged, wise men, after the flesh, because they have seen & read the records of their fore fathers, & some through their blindness being setled on their Lees, are resolved to go no further then their fathers went, nor to believe otherwise then the Church believes, and others dare not see beyond their profit, nor believe further then may stand with their gain, that being their godliness; Court-greatness having blinded their eyes, and made them to despise the oppression of the afflicted, and to be regardless of the consciences of the upright; their greatness having taken away their feeling, and many old men, like those in *Nehemiahs* days, who wept when they saw the foundation of the second Temple laid, and considered of the former Temple, how beautiful that had been; so do many now begin to bewail their loss, and cry out, what will become of their Gospel, if Tythes be taken away; and others say, what will you destroy propriety, and take away mens rights? the taking away of Tythes will quite destroy our Ministers, and impaire the Lawyers trade, *&c.* and so the downfal of *Babylon* must beget the bewailing of many Merchants, not onely of those who have inriched themselves by the laws, but also those who have made Merchandize of the souls of men; for this is as horrable a thing in our dayes, as it was in old in the days of the Prophet, *viz.* For the Priests to preach for hire, and for the Judges to judge for reward; and may it not be said of such now, as *Micha* said then?

The best of them is as a brier, and the most upright is sharper then a thorn hedge, the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh, now shall be thy perplexity. *Mich.* 7. 4.

But to return to the Objection, That they have as good a right to the tenth

tenth part as I have to mine, &c. To which it is said, by law they have no right, as before is said, for the law onely preserves my right, that another man may not take it from me, but gives right to no man that had it not derived to him, either by descent, purchase, or gift, as aforesaid; now if it cannot be made appear (by him who challengeth property in Tythes) that it came to him one of these wayes, aforesaid, then he hath no right to, nor legal property in them; now by descent he cannot have them, for that cannot descend to another, which is not *in rerum natura*, as the increase and renewing of my land (by my labor) is not, and therefore cannot discend from another, who never was owner of it, nor never had it in his possession, as no man can of my increase, procured by my labor, and if I plough not, no corn will grow, and if I mow not, no hay is made; and so it is in my power, whether any thing, how much, or nothing the Priest shall have. And again, If I by my own act do not set out my Tythes, he hath no property untill by my voluntary act I give him it; for it cometh not by the land, nor doth he challenge the tenth of the rent, nor tenth acre, but the tenth of the increase, renewing, or growing in, and upon the premises, &c.

And whereas it is said, the law implies a property in that it hath provided a punishment of treble damages for not setting it out, and what a Parliament doth, is supposed to be done by the people whom they represent, &c. To which I answer, That it is true, the Law-makers supposed a due to God and holy Church, and upon this supposition and foundation, Enacted a penalty upon him that did not set out his Tythes, but some of our late Judges have since adjudged that Tythes are not so due, *viz.* by Gods law, as Chief Justice *Rolls*, in the Upper Bench at *Westminster*. And if that supposed common right be generally seen and be confessed to be a real common wrong, may not a man make use of his eye, to avoid the pit which he and others in the time of their darkness fell into? and if a man will wink when he may see, if he fall then into the pit, is he not guilty of his own death?

And for the Stat. made in *Ed.* the 6. time, if the supposed right upon which that law is built, be found to be oppression and wrong, and that God and holy Church hath disclaimed their right to Tythes under the Gospel, and that by their writings upon record, that there being a change of the Priesthood, there is made also a necessity of the change of the law; then what is that law worth that is contrary to God, and that commandement which is opposit to his?

Again, as before is proved, not onely by the law of God, but also by the Common and Statute Law of this Nation, all Laws made contrary or not consonant to the law of God, are voide of themselves; and that law which is built upon a false rotten foundation, must needs fall, as that is which supposeth Tythes to be due by common right, or due to God and holy Church under the Gospel, which they are not, as before is proved; and then the reason of the law, failing, the law it self falls, for saith *Coke*, *Lex non est in foliis verborum sed in radice rationis*, and if that which is said to be due by common right, prove to be a common wrong, and general grievance, then that other maxim of the law, takes it away also (*Salus populi suprema lex*) the peoples weal is the chiefest law, and that it is the peoples intollerable burden, I need not prove.

And

And as no right nor property to Tythes comes to any by descent, or reason of any just law, so neither can any property be derived to any by purchase, or gift, for no man hath power (legally) to sell or give that which he hath no just interest in, neither may any man buy it (except in his own wrong) no more then a man may sell my goods which he hath gotten wrongfully from me, nor no more then another hath any just power to dispose, or give away that which is none of his, or he hath no right or property in himself to dispose of, the law counts such a gift or sale, to be theft and robbery.

And to say that it is an incumbrance which every man knows of when he buys his land, and therefore no wrong, is a meer device to deceive the simple withall, for a man buys his land free from all incumbrances whatsoever with this general warranty, and covenant, not onely free from all Statutes; Morgages, Judgements, &c. but also with these general words, *Free from all other incumbrances whatsoever*, which words are a deceit, if so be a man knows a tenth part to be due to another, and yet he sells the whole, so discharged as aforesaid; and if it be a real incumbrance in the law upon the estate, or that another hath a right and property in that which I bought absolute and free, as aforesaid, will not an Action in that Case lie against him that sold it free, and covenanted to make it good, as aforesaid? if so, what work would this make in the Nation for the Lawyers? but in truth, is it not intended by the Law, that every man should have and enjoy his land free as he bought it? and then he may give freely what he will, and to whom he will, and then (*volenti non fit injuria*) to him that is willing it is no wrong; and thus the famous reformers and Martyrs looked upon them, as *John Wickliff* in the 17. Article charged against him in these words, *viz.*

'That tenths are pure Almes, and that the Parishoners may for offence 'of their Curates, detain and keep them back, and bestow them upon o-'thers at their own wills and pleasures.

William Swindersby, saith in these words, 'That no Priest ows to sell by 'bargain and covenant his Ghostly travel, ne his prayers, ne Gods word, &c. 'nor any worldly mens reward, to ask or take for these, or for any of these, 'or for any Ghostly thing he errs and doth Symony. *Simonie & Simone Mago quum quis Ecclesiasticos functiones quæ meræ dei dona sunt nundinatur:* Whosoever purchaseth Offices with money which are Gods free gifts, commits Simony, and is like *Simon Magus.*

Walter Brute in these words, 'That Tythes are meer Alms, and in case 'that Curates shall be ill, that they may be lawfully bestowed upon others, 'by the temporal owners, *&c.*

Walt. Brute Further saith, 'That a Priest receiving by bargain any thing of 'yearly annuity, is in so doing, a Schismatick and excommunicate, &c.

William Thorpe, saith as followeth in these words, viz. 'After Christs as-'censions, and when the Apostles had received the holy Ghost, they travel-'led with their hands to get their livelihood, when that they might thus do 'for busie preaching, therefore by the example of himself, Saint *Paul* 'teacheth all the Priests of Christ to travel with their hands, when for 'busie teaching of the people, they might thus do, whose Priesthood God 'accepteth now, or will accept, or did in the Apostles time, and after their 'decease, and will do to the worlds end; but as *Cisterciensis*, in the thou-

Pope gregory the 10th first appointed tithes under the Gospel in in the year about 1211.

'sand year of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1111. yeen, one *Pope Gregory* the tenth, 'ordained new Tythes first to be given to Priests, now in the new law, but 'Saint *Paul* in his time whose trace or example all Priests of God inforce 'them to follow, seeing the covetousnes that was among the people, desir- 'ing to destroy that foul sin by the grace of God and true vertuous living, 'and example of himself; wrought and taught all Priests to follow him, as he 'followed Christ, willingly and patiently, in high poverty; wherefore *Paul* 'saith thus, the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel shall 'live of the Gospel, but we (saith *Paul*) that covet and busie us to be faith- 'ful followers of Christ use not this power, for lo, as *Paul* witnesseth when 'he was full poor and needy, preaching among the people, he was not 'chargeous unto them, but with his hands he travelled not onely to get 'his own living, but also the living of other poor and needy creatures, and 'since the people was never so coveteous, nor so avaritious I gheis as they 'are now, it were good councel if all Priests took good heed to this hea- 'venly learning of *Paul*, following him here in wilful poverty, nothing 'charging the people for their bodily livelihood; but because that many 'Priests do contrary to *Paul* in the aforesaid doctrine, *Paul* biddeth the 'people take heed of these Priests, that follow not him, as he had given them 'example, as if (saith he) *Paul* would say thus to the people, Accept ye 'no other Priests then they that live after the form that I have taught you, 'for certain in whatsoever dignity or order that any Priest is in, if he con- 'form him not to follow Christ and his Apostles in wilful poverty, and in o- 'ther heavenly vertues, and specially in true preaching of Gods word, 'though such a one be named a Priest, yet he is no more but a Priest in 'name; for the work of a very Priest in such a one wanteth: this sentence 'approveth *Augustine*, *Gregory*, *Chrysostome*, and *Lincolne* plainly.

And he saith further in these words, 'It is no wonder, though people 'grudge to give the Priests the livelihood that they ask, mickill people 'know now, how Priests should live, and how that they live contrary 'to Christ and to his Apostles, and therefore the people are full heavy to 'pay, as they do, their temporal goods to Parsons, and to other Vicars, and 'Priests, which should be faithful dispensators of the Parish goods, and ta- 'king to themselves no more but a scarce living, of Tythes nor of offerings, 'by the Ordinance of the common Law; for whatsoever Priests take of the 'people (be it Tythes or offering, or any other duty or service) the Priests 'ought to have thereof no more but a bare living, and to depart the residue 'to the poor men and women, especially of the Parish of whom they take 'this temporal living, but the most deal of Priests now wasteth their Pa- 'rish goods, and spendeth them at their own will, after the world in their 'vain lusts, so that in few places poor men have duely (as they should 'have) their own sustenence, neither of Tithes, nor of offerings, nor of o- 'ther large wages, and foundations the Priests take of the people, in divers 'manners, above that they need for needful sustenance of meat and cloath- ing, but the poor needy people are left and forsaken of Priests to be sustain- 'ed of the Parishioners, as if the Priests took nothing of the Parishioners 'to help the people with, and thus sir (saith *Thorp* to the Biship) into o- 'ver great charges of the Parishioners, they pay their temporal goods thrice,

where

'where once might ſuffice if prieſts were true diſpenſators. The Pariſhioners 'that pay their temporal goods (be they Tithes or offerings) to Prieſts that 'do not their offfce among them juſtly, are partners of every ſin of thoſe 'prieſts, becauſe that they ſuſtain thoſe prieſts folly in their ſin with their 'temporal goods; if theſe things be well conſidered, what wonder is it then 'if the pariſhioners grudge againſt theſe diſpenſators.

'And he further ſaith that *Paul* ſaith, that Tithes were given in 'the old Law to Levites and to prieſts that came of the lineage of 'Levi, but our Prieſts came not of the lineage of *Levi*, but of 'the lineage of *Judah*, to which *Judah* no Tithes were promiſed to be given, 'and therefore *Paul* ſaith ſince the prieſthood is changed from the generati- 'on of *Levi* to the generation of *Judah*, it is neceſſary that changing alſo be 'made of the Law, ſo that prieſts live now without Tithes and other duties 'that they claim, following Chriſt and his Apoſtles in wilful poverty, as they 'have given them example, for ſince Chriſt lived all the time of his preach- 'ing by pure alms of the people, and by example of him, his Apoſtles lived 'in the ſame wiſe, or elſe by the travel of their hands, as it is ſaid above. E- 'very prieſt whoſe prieſthood Chriſt approveth, knoweth well and confeſ- 'eth in word and in work, that a diſciple ought not to be above his maſter, 'but it ſufficeth, ſo a diſciple to be ſimple and pure, patient and meek, and 'by his example, ſpecially of his Maſter Chriſt; every prieſt ſhould rule him 'in all his living; and ſo after his cunning and power, a prieſt ſhould buſie 'him, to reform and rule whomſoever he might charitably.

'And he further ſaith thus, There is a Dr. (*I think it is St. Hierom.*) that 'ſaith thus, the prieſts that challenge now in the new Law Tithes, ſay in ef- 'fect, that Chriſt is not become man, nor that he hath yet ſuffered death for 'mans love. Wherefore this Dr. ſaith this ſentence; Since Tithes were the 'hires and wages limited to Levites, and to prieſts of the old Law for bear- 'ing about of the Tabernacle, and for ſlaying and fleaing of beaſts, burning 'of ſacrifices, and for keeping of the Temple, &c. and other things that 'pertained to their office, thoſe prieſts that will challenge or take Tithes, 'deny that Chriſt is come in the fleſh, and do the prieſts office in the old law, 'for whom Tithes were granted, for elſe this Dr. ſaith, Prieſts take Tithes 'now wrongfully; and ſaith further, That Tithes and other duties which 'prieſts challenge now are wrongfully called (freedom of holy Church) 'ſince neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles challenged nor took ſuch duties; there- 'fore thoſe takings of prieſts now are not juſtly called the freedom of holy 'Church; but all ſuch giving and taking ought to be called and holden the 'ſlandrous covetouſneſſe of men of holy Church.

And further ſaith in theſe words, viz. 'Since by the viciouſneſſe of 'prieſts both Lords and Commons are moſt ſinfully infected and led into the 'worſt, and becauſe of the Covetouſneſſe of prieſts and pride, and the boaſt 'that they have and make of their dignity and power, deſtroyeth not onely 'the vertues of the prieſthood in prieſts themſelves, but alſo over this it ſtir- 'eth God to take great vengeance both upon the Lords and upon the Com- 'mons, which ſuffer theſe prieſts charitably: And he further ſaith in anſwer 'to the Biſhop in theſe words, *viz.* That a proud prieſt may be known; when 'he denieth to follow Chriſt and his Apoſtles in wilful poverty and other 'vertues, and coveteth wordly worſhip, and taketh it gladly; and gather-

'eth together with pleading, menacing, or with flattering, or with Simony 'any worldly goods, and most if a priest busie him not chiefly in him-'self, and after in all other men and women after his cunning and power to 'withstand sin.

mat. 10. Luke 9. mark 7. Eusеb. Lib. 5. cap. 16.

And further I find by the Ecclesiastical Histories (written by *Eusebius*) mentioning *Apolonius* against *Montanus* saith thus, 'That *Montanus* fed the 'maintainers of his doctrine with sums of money and great hire to preach, 'which was forbidden in the holy Scripture that prophets should take hire, 'Christ commanded his disciples to take no mans gold or silver or apparel, 'or two coats; and saith by their fruits you shall know them; and further 'saith, That if hire be taken by a prophet, he is then no longer a prophet, 'let all that be false be tried conditional.

These are the faithful sayings of these men of famous memory, who in their time bore a faithful Testimony against the priests in their dayes, and other abominations and innovations brought in by those who were in the apostacie, since the dayes of Christ and his Apostles, which I have faithfully set down, that so those who say what is become of our fore fathers who suffered in the flames for witnessing against the superstition and Idolatry of those times in which they lived, may see themselves where they are, and what they are doing, while they ask what is become of their fore-fathers, and yet they themselves found walking in the steps of those men who persecuted and martyred those who they call their forefathers, but are indeed monstruous children, or rather the children of those who put the martyrs to death, as by their practices they make it appear in their maintaining like priests (*though now called Ministers*) and their unrighteous wages; which their forefathers witnessed against with the losse of their lives, Oh! blush for shame to behold thy practices, lest thou partaking of their sins do partake of their plagues also, and came out from those wayes, lest thou fall together with them, as thou hast holpen to uphold the enemies of the Lord. for as it is truly recorded in the same book of Martyrs in these words, viz. 'Whosoever do receive the holy Order by giving of mony, is not a priest, '*secundum rem & nomen*, but to say the truth, he desireth to be cal'd a priest, 'that is, to be a priest *secundum nomen tantum*, and such a priest wch is a priest 'in name onely, is no priest no more then St. Mary painted is St. *Mary*, nor 'a false Dr, a Dr. but no Doctor, and a man painted is not a man, but no man; 'and thus such a priest in name onely is not a priest, because that all faith-'ful men do firmly believe, with St. *Gregory*, that no man buying the holy 'Orders may then be called a priest, as he saith they who buy or sell holy 'Orders can be no priests, whereupon it is written *anathema dandi, & ana-'thema accipiendi* that is he is accursed that gives, and he no lesse that takes; and those who are now found with the marks of the false Prophets and Priests upon them, are, as was said then, *uni voce natura* but yet *aqui voce in moribus*, that is *one in nature*, *though different in manners*, and thou who art such a one, or thou who maintains such a one as is made a Priest for his mony, or by the arts learned from men, and natural knowledge gotten by study, though such a one be called a gifted man, yet he will be found to be one whom Christ never sent; and his marks makes manifest who sent him if he preach for hire, and divine for mony, or take any thing by compact or agree-

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ment with any people, whatsoever name they go under, *filthy lucre* is not far off, and poyson enters and eats like a canker until utter consumption overtake, and let none think to excuse themselves with saying, how shall I live, or how shall my wife and children be maintained, or in putting it off, with saying, I preach not for mony, if so, let thy mony & gifts alone & preach without any, (if thou must needs preach) for it is actions and not words onely by which the Ministers of Christ were made to differ (from Antichrists ministers) in all ages since the beginning, and if thou doest not preach freely henceforth, and leave taking thy gifts and rewards, then I shall conclude it is for money, and the way thou runnest so greedily and zealously in, is the way of *Balaam*, and thou art to take heed to thy self least the day come upon thee; when thou shalt desire to die the death of the righteous, and thy latter end to be like his, but then it will be too late, and *Esaues* portion must be thine, who hast prophaned the Name of the Lord, and sold thy birth-right for a morsel of bread, even that sweet peace and content in God, which (it may be) sometime thy soul hath tasted, but consulting with flesh and blood, and looking out at the examples of others, and how deliciously they fare every day, thy mind hath been beguiled from the simplicity that is in Christ, and so hast put thy self from under Gods care, and now art caring for thy self, and wife, and children, and thy life is miserable to thee, although thou putteſt as good a face upon it as thou canst: yet in secret have many gone mourning because of these things, and at last have sunk under the burthen of them, for whose sake my soul hath mourned in secret, and I have been pained within me to consider how hard a thing it is for such a one to be saved, and what shifts they have found out to keep their gifts, livings, and rewards, under several pretences, covers and distinctions as that they are free gifts given of old, & no man now is at all prejudiced by the receiving of them, and in their saying if I did not, some else would; and some saying as they say *Luther* once said, that as in time past the ministers of Sathan was maintained by them, and those that did work for the Divel, so now they for a time may be imployed for the service of God to maintain his ministers, and his pure worships; and besides say some, if I go out of them a worse may come in my room, and such like reasonings have mine ears heard from some, who are accounted not the least amongst many, and others looking at the esteem they have amongst great men, and therefore say, if I forsake taking gifts they will conclude me a sectary, and then I shall be more retired, and grow more in acquaintance with God and delight in communion with him, and so by my faithfulness to him, I shall stand a witnesse for God against greater abominations then these, knowing that God reveals his secrets to them that fear him, and departt from iniquity, and hate every evil way, and so at last shall loose all my acquaintance and familiars, and shall become as an owl in the desart, and pelican in the Wilderness, and like a sparrow cherping alone upon the house top, which I do now prevent, by walking in a way wherein I have many good men of my side, and company enough to go along with me, and in hopes as the times mend to come to greater preferment, and as long as I take no more then just doth maintain me, I know not but if any man will give me a gift or living, I may take it, and do good to others with it, for

out of my gift I may maintain and contribute to maintain divers gifted brethren that may be serviceable in the Lords work, and other good deeds I may do with my gift, which if I had it not I could not do.

Job 36. 21. 22. Oh, Take heed least the charge against *Job* be made good against you, *regard not iniquity, for this hast thou chosen rather then affliction, behold God exalteth by his power, who teacheth like him*; dost thou not know that the least evil is not to be done that good may come of it, and how that *rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornes is as iniquity and idolatry*, and because you Priests have rejected and neglected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected you from being his ministers, and as *Saul* for his disobedience to Gods command, *the Kingdom was rent from him*, though he had observed part thereof, and that which he left undone was as he thought for the best, and could not be reckoned a neglect or rejection, and therefore said with confidence to to the Prophet of the Lord, when he came to him, *blessed be thou of the Lord, for I have performed the commandment of the Lord, &c.* what meaneth then the taking hire and gifts and preaching for money, and taking mens goods by force from them, that for conscience sake cannot maintain a hireling Priest? *hath not God more delight in obeying his voice then in burnt offerings, and in obedience then in sacrifice?* and to live by faith and take no thought nor no staff nor scrip, but like the children of *Abraham* walk in his steps and go when God saith go, and come when he saith come, and plant a vineyard and eat of the fruit of it, but eat not of the fruit of other mens labours that have received none of your spirituals, and therefore cannot give you their carnals, nor mind not the fleece nor the wool but mind the Lord of the harvest, who gives his penny to them he sends forth, and though they took nothing with them when they went out, when they returned he asked them if they wanted any thing, and they said no; and none of the Apostles of Christ took any more then what was freely given them by the Saints that had reaped of their spirituals, and that onely to supply their present necessities, but never took any thing by constraint, neither coveted any mans silver, or gold, or apparel, or took any thing for preaching, but preached freely, and took what they had as free alms, and such cannot want while there is any of the love of God in people, *for he that hath this Worlds goods and seeth his brother want, how dwells the love of God in him?* and if this is shewed to every brother, how much more to him that labours in the Gospel of Christ; therefore it may well and upon good ground be suspected that either the Gospel that those preach that take any thing in lieu of preaching (as hire, or as wages is due for work or any other gift for to preach, which gift I cannot have, if I preach not) is not the Gospel of Christ which the preachers of it was to live upon, but another Gospel, seeing by experience we see that the Gospel which these men preach would starve them, if it were not for the Justices of peace and Judges favour, which causes peoples goods to be taken from them against their wills, & given to the Priests, contrary to the Law of God and this Nation as before is proved, or else that they are no ministers of Christs sending forth; for whom he alwayes did and ever will provide maintenance, and furnish them with his presence to the end of the World, so that such cannot complain of want, but those who have not his presence with them are full of complaints to Parliaments, to Councels, to Judges,

1 Sam. 15.

For the statute of *Ed.* 6. gives not the treble damages to them.

to

to Justices; and who not that they have the least hope of relief from? by which things we know them to be none of the ministers of Christs sending; or else lastly there is none of Gods love in people, and if they beget not men and women into Gods love, what do they preach for? for strife, for debate, and malice, and envy, and hatred, and covetousnesse, and pride, and Worldly greatnesse, and respect of persons because of advantage, and taking hire, and paying hire for preaching, and giving gifts, and taking gifts for preaching, and taking Tithes, and giving Tithes for preaching, which since Christs ascention are all marks of carnal people, and carnal priests, and the word of Reconciliation is not committed to them, as it was to the ministers of Christ of old, and there was witnesses against them in all ages by some that were faithful, as by these few presidents out of the book Martyrs may appear, with many witnesses more both before and since, which might be produced out of several authors of no mean esteem, but those who will not turn and repent, and be washed from their marks of falsity and deceit, must have their portion with the deceivers: and the deceived, that pay them for their deceit the wages of unrighteousnesse as aforesaid, will be marked also if they speedily repent not, but not with the mark of Christs sheep, (for they know his voice, and a strangers voice they will not follow) but of the goats; and of which sentence that famous Reformer *John Hus* have by way of prophesie foretold, and also of a deliverance that *shall* come to the Church and people of God, as it is recorded in the book of Martyrs in these words,

'Moreover hereupon note and mark by the way that the Church of God 'cannot be reduced to his former dignity, or be reformed before all things 'first be made new; the truth whereof is plain by the Temple of *Solomon*, 'like as the Clergie and priests, so also the people and Laitie; or unlesse all 'such as now be addict to avarice from the least to the most be first conver- Vol. the
'ted and reclaimed, as well the people as Clergie and priests; albeit as my 1. page
'minde now giveth me, I believe rather the first, that is, that then shall rise 830.
'a new people, formed after the new man, which is created after God; Of 'the which people new Clerks and Priests shall come, and be taken, which 'all shall hate covetousnesse and the glory of this life, hastening to a heaven-'ly conversation, notwithstanding all these things shall come to passe, and 'be brought by little and little in order of times, dispensed of God for the 'same purpose, and this God doth and will do for his own mercy and good-'nesse, and for the riches of his great longanamity and patience, giving time 'and space of repentance to them that have long lien in their sins, to amend 'and fly from the face of the Lords fury, while that in like manner the carnal 'people and carnal priests succeessively and in time shall fall away and be 'consumed as with the moth, &c.

And further it is yet more sure out of that Record, against which lies no averment, *viz. Jeremiah* 23. 1.2.3.4.5 and 6. and throughout that chap-'ter, 'Wo be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pa-'sture saith the Lord, Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against 'the pastours that feed my people, ye have scattered my flock and driven 'them away, and have not visited them, Behold I will visit upon you the 'evil of your doings saith the Lord, and I will gather the remnant of my 'flock out of all Countries whether I have driven them, and will bring them

again

'again to their folds, and they ſhall be fruitful and increaſe, and I will ſet up
'ſhepherds over them which ſhall feed them, & they ſhall fear no more nor
'be diſmaied, neither ſhall they be lacking ſaith the Lord, behold the days
'come ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe up unto *David* a righteous branch,
'and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and ſhall execute Judgment and Juſtice
'in the earth, in his dayes *Judah* ſhall be ſaved, and *Iſrael* ſhall dwell ſafely,
'and this is his Name whereby he ſhall be called.

The Lord our Righteouſneſſe.

THE END.